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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/975,217	10/11/2001	William T. Wilkinson	WIL-100US	7802
31344	7590	08/25/2005	EXAMINER	
RATNERPRESTIA P.O. BOX 1596 WILMINGTON, DE 19899			FISCHER, ANDREW J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3627	

DATE MAILED: 08/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/975,217

Applicant(s)

WILKINSON, WILLIAM T.

Examiner

Andrew J. Fischer

Art Unit

3627

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 June 2005.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Acknowledgements

1. Applicant's amendment filed June 13, 2005 is acknowledged. Accordingly, claim 1 remain pending.
2. All references in this Office Action to the capitalized versions of "Applicant" refers specifically the Applicant of record. References to lower case versions of "applicant" or "applicants" refers to any or all patent "applicants." Unless expressly noted otherwise, references to "Examiner" in this Office Action refers to the Examiner of record while reference to or use of the lower case version of "examiner" or "examiners" refers to examiner(s) generally.
3. This Office Action is written in OACS. Because of this, the Examiner is unable to control formatting, paragraph numbering, font, spelling, line spacing, and/or other word processing issues. The Examiner sincerely apologies for these errors.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §112 2nd Paragraph

4. The following is a quotation of the 2nd paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
5. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, it is unclear as to what "anti-cyber squatting rules" applicant is referring to.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. §103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office Action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claim 1, as understood by the Examiner, is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over The Intellectual Property Strategist's "Carrying Out Effective IP Due Diligence" ("Due Diligence") and Risen, Jr. et. al. (U.S. 6,018,714) ("Risen") in view of Horngren et. al.'s Introduction to Financial Accounting, Revised 3rd Ed ("Horngren") and Bereskin Daniel R.'s Intellectual Property Assets as Sources of Potential Corporate Profits ("Bereskin").

8. This rejection is based upon the sale or assignment of an intellectual property ("IP"). Except for Horngren, all references in the statement of the rejection are concerned with the sale or assignment of IP.

9. Due Diligence is cited for a single reason: because it expressly states that "The first step in *any* transaction involving the acquisition of an interest in intellectual property is the identification and categorization of the intellectual assets involved. [Emphasis added.]"

10. Risen discloses that a method for determining a value of a patent, trademark, copyright, trade secret, trade dress, and "other intellectual property." Risen also discloses "insuring the validity" of the IP. In other words, one of ordinary skill in the art recognizes that that in order for the patent, trademark, copyright, trade secret, trade dress, domain name, or other IP to have value, the intellectual property must be valid.

Art Unit: 3627

However the references do not directly discuss domain names as an IP. The Examiner takes Official Notice that Domain Names are a form of IP that has value, that the domain names are subject to anti-cyber squatting statutes, and that Domain Names may be subject to disputes because of trademark rights of a third party. Moreover, the sale of IP references do not directly disclose how IP is valued on income statements and balance sheets. However Horngren discloses a typical income statement and balance sheet and how the valuation of all company assets are used in these statements.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Due Diligence/Risen combination as taught by Horngren and Bereskin to include the value of the IP (as determined by a formula) on income statement(s) and balance sheet(s). Such a modification would have allowed corporations a means of reducing their debt-to-capital ratio, thereby enabling them to borrow more for new acquisitions.

11. In this case, Bereskin is cited in the statement of the rejection only because it provides the motivation to combine the sale of IP references with Horngren. In particular, Bereskin states on page 4 that “a number of U.K. corporations have formally valued their trade-mark assets, and have included them in their balance sheets as a means of reducing their debt-to-capital ratio, thereby enabling them to borrow more for new acquisitions.”

12. For due process purposes and because Applicant has not objectively indicated and redefined claim limitation(s) to have meanings other than their ordinary and accustomed meanings, the Examiner confirms that Applicant has decided not to be his own lexicographer. To support this position, the Examiner again notes the following factual findings as first discussed in the previous Office Actions. First, the Examiner has again carefully reviewed the

Art Unit: 3627

specification and prosecution history and can not locate any lexicographic definition(s). Second, the Examiner finds that not only has Applicant not pointed to definitional statements in his specification or prosecution history, Applicant has also not pointed to a term or terms in a claim with which to draw in those statements¹ with the required clarity, deliberateness, and precision.² Third, after receiving express notice of the Examiner's position that lexicography is *not* invoked, Applicant's three (3) responses have not pointed out the "supposed errors" in the Examiner's position regarding lexicography invocation in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) (*i.e.* Applicant did not argue lexicography *was* invoked). Forth and to be sure of Applicant's intent, the Examiner also notes that Applicant has declined the Examiner's express invitation³ to be his own lexicographer. Finally, after receiving express notice of the preceding factual findings and conclusions, Applicant's latest response again fails to point out the supposed errors in the Examiner's position regarding lexicography invocation in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b). Moreover, Applicant's latest response—while fully considered by the Examiner—has not

¹ "In order to overcome this heavy presumption in favor of the ordinary meaning of claim language, it is clear that a party wishing to use statements in the written description to confine or otherwise affect a patent's scope must, *at the very least*, point to a term or terms in the claim with which to draw in those statements. [Emphasis added.]" *Johnson Worldwide Assocs. v. Zebco Corp.*, 175 F.3d 985, 989, 50 USPQ2d 1607, 1610 (Fed. Cir. 1999).

² "The patentee's lexicography must, of course, appear 'with reasonable clarity, deliberateness, and precision' before it can affect the claim." *Renishaw PLC v. Marposs Societa' per Azioni*, 158 F.3d 1243, 1249, 48 USPQ2d 1117, 1121 (Fed. Cir. 1998) citing *In re Paulsen*, 30 F.3d 1475, 1480, 31 USPQ2d 1671, 1674 (Fed. Cir. 1994).

³ See *e.g. Fuji Photo Film Co. v. ITC*, 386 F.3d 1095, 72 USPQ2d 1769, 1773 (Fed. Cir. 2004) (noting that applicants' failure to correct the examiner's characterization of an element of claim interpretation is nevertheless an indication of how a claim should be interpreted since applicant declined the examiner's express invitation to correct a possible error in claim interpretation: "applicant's attention was called to the examiner's interpretation of [how the element was interpreted by the examiner, and] applicant was invited to correct the examiner's interpretation—an invitation the applicant did not accept."

Art Unit: 3627

changed the Examiner's reasonable conclusion that Applicant has decided not to be his own lexicographer. Therefore (and unless expressly noted otherwise by the Examiner), the heavy presumption in favor of the ordinary and accustomed meaning for claim terminology is again confirmed. Accordingly, claim 1 continues to be interpreted with its "broadest reasonable interpretation," *In re Morris*, 127 F.3d 1048, 1054, 44 USPQ2d 1023, 1027 (Fed. Cir. 1997), and the Examiner continues to rely heavily and extensively on this interpretation.⁴

13. Under the broadest reasonable interpretation standard noted above and unless expressly modified in this Office Action, the Examiner maintains his interpretations including the statements and/or definitions of claim limitations as noted in the previous Office Action. Those previous definitions are part of the administrative record and, in accordance with *In re Morris*, are provided simply as a factual source to support the Examiner's claim interpretations (and ultimately the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences claim interpretations if necessary⁵) during ex parte examination.

Response to Arguments

14. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claim have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

⁴ See 37 C.F.R. §1.104(c)(3) which states in part: "the examiner may rely upon admissions by applicant . . . as to *any matter* affecting patentability [Emphasis added.]"

⁵ See *Gechter v. Davidson*, 116 F.3d 1454, 1460, 43 USPQ2d 1030, 1035 (Fed. Cir. 1997) ("[W]e hold that the Board is required to set forth in its opinions specific findings of fact and conclusions of law adequate to form a basis for our review.").

Conclusion

15. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP §706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

16. References considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure are listed on form PTO-892. All references listed on form PTO-892 are cited in their entirety.

17. The following two (2) citations to the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure ("MPEP") apply to this Office Action: MPEP citations to Chapters 100, 200, 500, 600, 700, 1000, 1100, 1300, 1400, 1500, 1700, 1800, 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500, 2600, and 2700 are from the MPEP 8th Edition, Rev. 2, May 2004. All remaining MPEP citations are from MPEP 8th Edition, August 2001.

18. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

Art Unit: 3627

system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

19. Applicant is reminded that patents are written by and for skilled artisans. See *Vivid Technologies, Inc. v. American Science and Engineering, Inc.*, 200 F.3d 795, 804, 53 USPQ2d 1289, 1295 (Fed. Cir. 1999) (“patents are written by and for skilled artisans”). The Examiner therefore starts with the presumption that Applicant is a skilled artisan who possess at least ordinary skill in the art. Consequently, it is the Examiner’s position that because the patent references of record are directed to those with ordinary skill in this art, these references are clear, explicit, and specific as to what they teach. Nevertheless some applicants apparently have difficulty understanding the references. In an effort to maintain compact prosecution, provide due process, and to help these applicants understand the contents of a reference when viewed from the position of one of ordinary skill in this art, Applicant is hereby given actual notice that if after reasonably reading any reference of record, if Applicant can not reasonably understand or if Applicant has difficulty comprehending one or more sentence(s), statement(s), diagram(s), or principle(s) set forth in one or more of the reference(s) of record, Applicant should (in his next appropriately filed response) bring this issue to the attention of the Examiner. In addition to bringing this issue to the attention of the Examiner, and in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b), Applicant’s response must also state *why* he either does not understand or has difficulty comprehending the reference. If after properly receiving (*i.e.* Applicant’s response is made of record) both Applicant’s request for understanding and the reasons as to *why* the request is made—and assuming the reference is germane to at least one outstanding rejection—the Examiner may either provide a substitute reference, or alternatively, do his best to elucidate the particular sentence(s), statement(s), diagram(s), or principles(s) at issue in a reasonable manner.

Art Unit: 3627

20. Because this application is now final, Applicant is also reminded of the USPTO's after final practice as discussed in MPEP §714.12 and §714.13 and that entry of amendments after final is *not* a matter of right. "The refusal of an examiner to enter an amendment after final rejection of claims is a matter of discretion." *In re Berger*, 279 F.3d 975, 984, 61 USPQ2d 1523, 1529 (Fed. Cir. 2002) (citations omitted). Furthermore, suggestions or examples of claim language provided by the Examiner are just that—suggestions or examples—and do not constitute a formal requirement mandated by the Examiner. Unless stated otherwise by an express indication that a claim is "allowed," exemplary claim language provided by the Examiner to overcome a particular rejection or to change claim interpretation has *not been addressed* with respect to other aspects of patentability (*e.g.* §101 patentable subject matter, §112 1st paragraph written description and enablement, §112 2nd paragraph indefiniteness, and §102 and §103 prior art). Therefore, any claim amendment submitted under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 that incorporates an Examiner suggestion or example or simply changes claim interpretation will nevertheless require further consideration and/or search and a patentability determination as noted above.

21. In accordance with the USPTO's goals of customer service, compact prosecution, and reduction of cycle time, the Examiner has made every effort to clarify his position regarding claim interpretation and any rejections or objections in this application. Furthermore, the Examiner has again provided Applicants with notice—for due process purposes—of his position regarding his factual determinations and legal conclusions. The Examiner notes and thanks Applicant for his "Remarks" (beginning on page 4) traversing the Examiner's positions on various points. If Applicant disagrees with any additional factual determination or legal

Art Unit: 3627

conclusion made by the Examiner in this Office Action whether expressly stated or implied,⁶ the Examiner respectfully reminds Applicant to properly traverse the Examiner's position(s) in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) in his next properly filed response. By addressing these issues now, matters where the Examiner and Applicant agree can be eliminated allowing the Examiner and Applicant to focus on areas of disagreement (if any) with the goal towards allowance in the shortest possible time. If Applicant has any questions regarding the Examiner's positions or has other questions regarding this communication or even previous communications, Applicant is strongly encouraged to contact Examiner Andrew J. Fischer whose telephone number is (571) 272-6779. If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's immediate supervisor, Alexander Kalinowski, can be reached at (571) 272-6771. The fax number for facsimile responses is now (571) 273-8300.



Andrew J. Fischer
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3627

AJF
August 22, 2005

⁶ E.g., if the Examiner rejected a claim under §103 with two references, although not directly stated, it is the Examiner's implied position that the references are analogous art.